

Message Text

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71

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00

SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 IO-13 CU-02 MCT-01 ACDA-07

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FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9223

INFO PANCANAL

USCINCSO

USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE 572

C O N F I D E N T I A L PANAMA 6671

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS:PINT, PN

SUBJECT: ANALYSIS OF PANAMANIAN SITUATION

REF: PANAMA 6516

1. THE EMBASSY HAS REVIEWED ITS ANALYSIS OF THE POLITICAL SITUATION (REFTEL) WHICH WAS WRITTEN JUST PRIOR TO THE STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 20. WE BELIEVE IT IS STILL VALID.

2. THE MAIN CHANGE IN THE SITUATION IS THE GOVERNMENT'S FURTHER LOSS OF STUDENT SUPPORT, PARTICULARLY IN THE UNIVERSITY, AS A RESULT OF THE NATIONAL GUARD'S REPRESSION OF MONDAY'S ATTEMPTED DEMONSTRATION. THE PANAMANIAN STUDENT FEDERATION (FEP), HEAVILY INFLUENCED BY THE GOVERNMENT, HAS LOST ITS CREDIBILITY AS A SPOKESMAN FOR STUDENTS.

3. THE STUDENTS, MOST BUSINESSMEN AND ABOVE ALL THE GOVERNMENT ARE STEPPING BACK TO REVIEW THEIR POSITIONS
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IN THE LIGHT OF CHANGED CIRCUMSTANCES.

4. BY THE WAY, WE BELIEVE THAT THE ALAN RIDING ARTICLE
IN THE NEW YORK TIMES OF SEPTEMBER 23 PAINTS A SOMEWHAT
DARKER PICTURE FOR TORRIJOS THAN THE FACTS WOULD JUSTIFY.
IT SEEMS TO US THAT HE HAS DRAWN TOO HASTY A
CONCLUSION FROM AN OBVIOUSLY DETERIORATING POLITICAL
SITUATION. OUR FIRM BELIEF CONTINES TO BE THAT
THE NATIONAL GUARD IS STILL BEHIND TORRIJOS; NO
ALTERNATIVE GOVERNMENT IS BEING SERIOUSLY DISCUSSED BY
THEOSE WHO COULD ENGINEER A COUP. ABOVE ALL NO
SECTOR-NOT EVEN THE STUDENTS-HAS SHOWN THE
POLITICAL WILL WHICH WILL BE REQUIRED IF TORRIJOS IS TO
BE BROUGHT DOWN.
JORDEN

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